

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-41 (cancel)

Claim 42 (new): A method of using a freeze-dried porous shaped article to apply at least one skeleton-forming agent to an external skin and/or hair surface of a human or an animal, the method comprising:

- step (a): providing a molded, freeze-dried, porous shaped article having a volume of from approximately 0.1 cm^3 to approximately 6 cm^3 and a diameter of from approximately 3 mm to approximately 60 mm, wherein said shaped article comprises the at least one skeleton-forming agent but does not contain any protein-based skeleton-forming agents;
- step (b): first contacting the freeze-dried shaped article with an aqueous solution comprising water or with an aqueous solution that contains at least one selected from the group consisting of active substances and auxiliary substances to form a totally dissolved solution or gel within a rate of dissolution of less than 1 minute, measured with a method for measuring the "Disintegration-time of tablets and capsules" with a test apparatus according to PharmEU; and
- step (c): subsequently applying the solution or the gel formed in the contacting step to the external skin and/or hair surface of the human or the animal.

Claim 43 (new): The method according to claim 42, wherein the skeleton-forming agent is at least one polysaccharide or a derivative thereof.

Claim 44 (new): The method according to claim 42, wherein the at least one skeleton-forming agent is a low-viscosity skeleton-forming agent having a viscosity of less than 2000 mPa.s, measured in a one-per-cent-by-weight solution or suspension in water at 20 °C and at pH 6-8.

Claim 45 (new): The method according to claim 42, wherein the at least one skeleton-forming agent has an average molar mass of approximately 10^3 up to approximately 10^8 .

Claim 46 (new): The method according to claim 42, wherein the freeze-dried porous shaped article in step (b) exhibits the geometrical shape of a sphere.

Claim 47 (new): The method according to claim 42, wherein the at least one skeleton-forming agent is selected from the group of water soluble polymers comprising sodium alginate, carrageenan, xanthan gum, cellulose, hyaluronic acid and chitosan or any mixture thereof.

Claim 48 (new): The method according to claim 42, wherein the at least one skeleton-forming agent is sodium alginate with a calcium content of less than 3 wt.%.

Claim 49 (new): The method according to claim 42, wherein in step (a) the porous shaped article further comprises one or more selected from the group consisting of active substances selected from the group consisting of cosmetic active substances and pharmaceutical active substances and auxiliary substances.

Claim 50 (new): The method according to claim 49, wherein in step (a) the porous shaped article comprises one or more active substance selected from vitamins or from the group of oils that are suitable for cosmetic purposes or mixtures thereof

Claim 51 (new): The method according to claim 49, wherein in step (a) the porous shaped article comprises one or more auxiliary substances selected from the group consisting of washing surfactants, dispersing agents, emulsifiers, fillers, pH-adjusting agents, buffering substances, stabilizers, co-solvents, pharmaceutically and cosmetically conventional dyestuffs, pharmaceutically and cosmetically conventional pigments, preservatives, plasticizers, lubricants and slip additives.

Claim 52 (new): The method according to claim 42, wherein the porous shaped article further comprises squalane.

Claim 53 (new): The method according to claim 42, wherein in step (b) the aqueous solution comprises one or more active substances selected from the group consisting of cosmetic active substances and pharmaceutical active substances.

Claim 54 (new): The method according to claim 42, wherein in step (b) the aqueous solution comprises one or more auxiliary substances selected from the group consisting of washing surfactants, dispersing agents, emulsifiers, fillers, pH-adjusting agents, buffering substances, stabilisers, co-solvents, pharmaceutically and cosmetically conventional dyestuffs, pharmaceutically and cosmetically conventional pigments, preservatives, plasticizers, lubricants and slip additives.

Claim 55 (new): The method according to claim 42, wherein the shaped article according to step (a) exhibits a density within the range of from 0.01 g/cm^3 to 0.8 g/cm^3 and comprises:

- at least 10 wt.% of the one or more skeleton-forming agents, a 1 percent-by-weight solution or suspension of which in water at 20°C and at pH 6-8 has a viscosity of less than $2000 \text{ mPa} \cdot \text{s}$, proteins being excepted,
- $0.000001 \text{ wt.}\%$ up to $50 \text{ wt.}\%$ of one or more active substances,
- $0.1 \text{ wt.}\%$ to $70 \text{ wt.}\%$ of one or more auxiliary substances, and
- up to $20 \text{ wt.}\%$ water.